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THE SCHOOL REVIEW

A JOURNAL OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

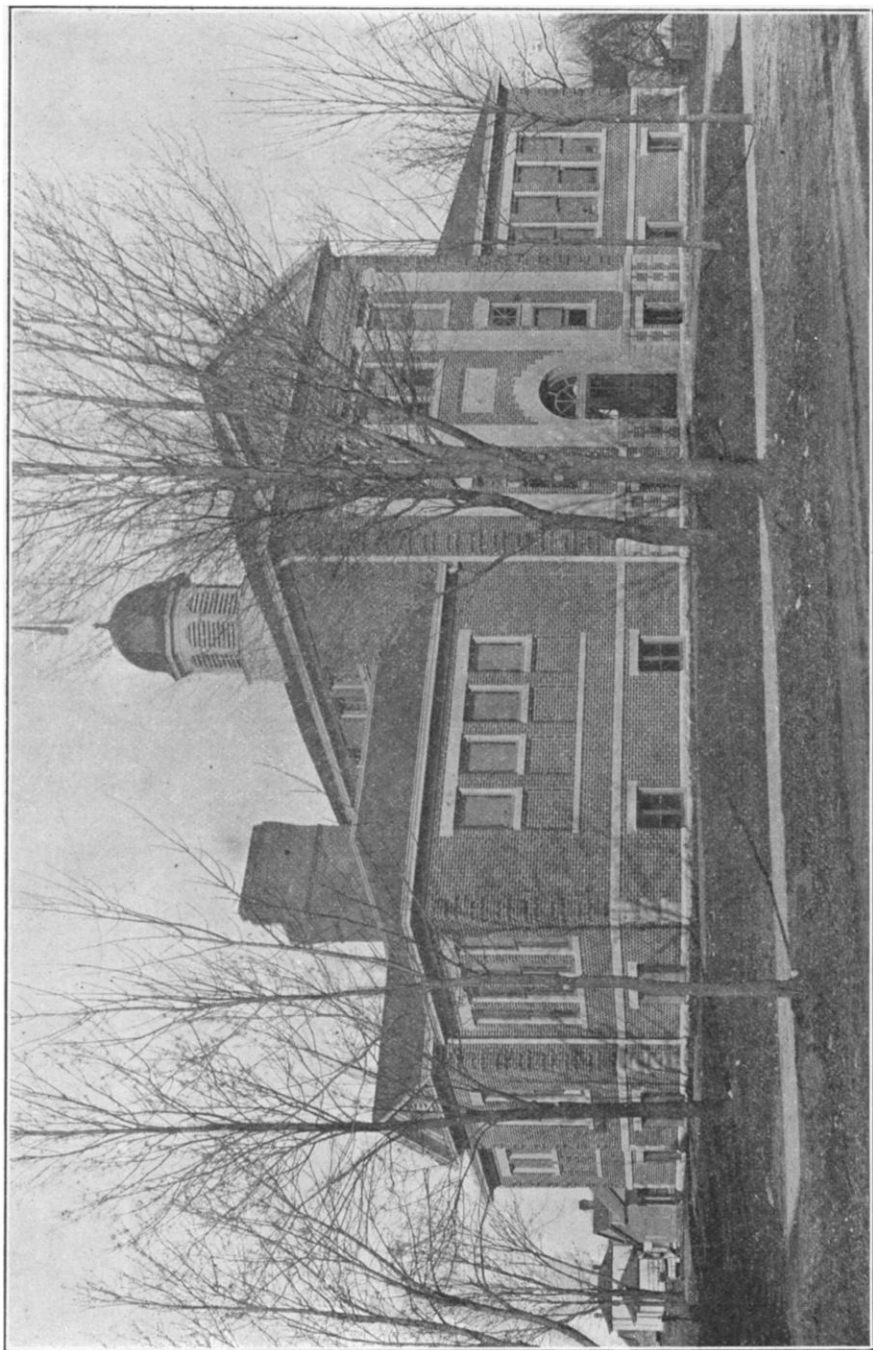
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THE TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL IN INDIANA.

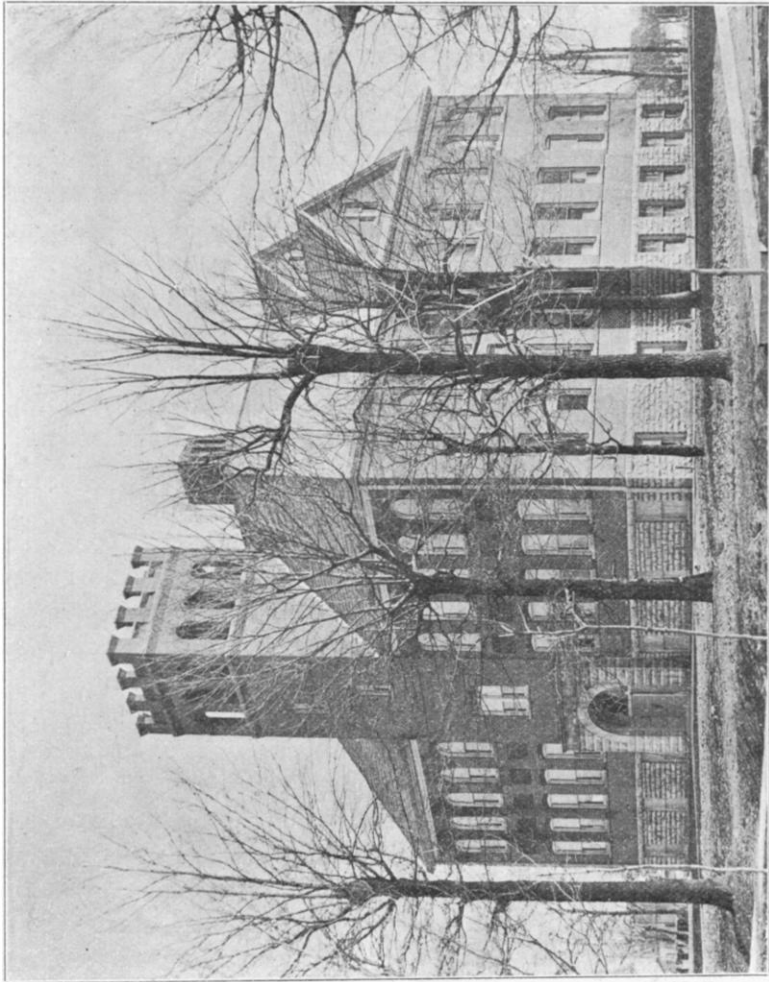
It was in May, 1785, that Congress passed an act providing for a survey of the Northwest Territory which should divide it into townships six miles square, each township to be further subdivided into thirty-six sections each one mile square and containing six hundred and forty acres. This act also provided that Section 16 in every township should be reserved for the maintenance of public schools. Here we have the origin of what have come to be considered the two most significant factors in the development of Indiana's school system—the township unit and the first source of revenue. The famous ordinance of 1787 to which we trace so largely the origin of our free institutions set up for us a high ideal, which has dominated our work in education: "Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged." An act of 1804 authorized that a township of land be set apart near Vincennes to be used in founding a college. In 1816 the act which made Indiana a state provided for a section in each township for the use of schools, and also that one entire township, in addition to the one heretofore reserved for that purpose, be reserved for the use of a seminary of learning. The constitution adopted in 1816 provided for township schools, county seminaries, and state university, ascending in regular gradation, with free tuition and equally open to all. In 1818 the general assembly of Indiana passed a law making it the duty of the governor to appoint for



each county a seminary trustee, who was to accumulate and invest funds arising from exemption moneys and fines, as provided in the constitution, and looking to the establishment of a high-grade secondary school in each county that should receive pupils from the township schools and fit them for the university. In 1821 the general assembly appointed a committee of seven to report to the next general assembly a bill providing for a general system of education ascending in regular gradation from township schools to a state university. The work of this committee resulted in the law of 1824, which made the system consist of the rural school, the county seminary, and the state seminary. No provisions whatever were made for town or city schools. Indeed, the schools during all these years, and for many years longer, depended wholly upon the sentiment of the community. In 1833 a law made some attempt to elaborate the system by providing for a county commissioner of education, three township trustees, and three trustees in each school district.

These acts tell the story of the progress of education in Indiana to the middle of the nineteenth century. School systems are not made by the passage of laws—except on paper. The Indiana system was on paper. The ideals were good, but they could not be realized for more reasons than one. The resources were meager, and in many cases not properly cared for. The county seminaries furnished practically the only opportunity for education, and this opportunity was poor enough, with a few exceptions. The buildings provided were poor, the equipment was poor, and those who attended had tuition to pay. The day for free schools for all was afar off, and illiteracy grew apace. The people were busy felling forests and draining swamps, and making for themselves homes. They exhausted their time and their energy in providing for their families the necessities of life, and in battling with malaria and other prevalent diseases. So they had no leisure for the contemplation of educational problems, and the spiritual life had to wait. Then, it must be remembered that our forefathers came from such diverse sections that the population was made up of almost every shade of belief, and with manners and customs as varied as the

regions whence they came. New England, the Virginias, and the Carolinas contributed to the tide of emigration that settled our state, and the National Road became a dividing line between



two sections that were to develop a great commonwealth. With such a diversity of opinions upon all subjects, it is not strange that educational progress was slow. The people were slow to impose upon themselves so-called burdens of taxation for public

education, and it took a long struggle to bring about a different notion.

Caleb Mills, who came to Indiana in the thirties as principal of the school at Crawfordsville (which afterwards became Wabash College), probably did more than any other man to bring a change of opinion. It was he who by his insistent messages inspired the law of 1849 and dictated practically the educational sentiment of the new constitution. Of course, there had been many men of high ideals, splendid teachers, who had come to the state at different times, and who with real missionary zeal had furthered the cause of education. M. Rivet, a Frenchman who had fled to this country at the time of the French Revolution—a well-educated, cultured gentleman—taught school at Vincennes as early as 1793. Then, such men as John I. Morrison and Barabus C. Hobbs conducted schools from which young men went to college, and afterwards located in other towns in the state and opened schools of their own. It was through such men as these that the seminaries and private academies were maintained in the forties and fifties. As many as seventy-three of these schools had been established before 1850. Aside from the efficient work which these schools did in particular cases, they were of inestimable service in keeping the question of education before the people. The people still believed that parents should decide what education their children should have, and should provide it for them. They had not yet come into the notion that every child has a right to an education, and that it is to the interest of the public to promote it by taxation. Secondary education was thought to belong to private enterprises and religious organizations. Seminaries similar to those established by the counties were founded by the churches, out of which grew many of the denominational colleges that are still flourishing and doing good work. Among these may be mentioned Wabash and Hanover, Presbyterian; DePauw and Moore's Hill, Methodist; Franklin, Baptist; Earlham, Friends; Butler, Christian; and Notre Dame, Catholic. It was the fact that these provisions had been made for secondary and higher education, and that no systematic provisions had been made for common

schools, that led Caleb Mills to undertake the work which he did. He and the men whom he associated with him succeeded in arousing the people to a sense of their responsibility. The first fruit of their labors came in the law of 1849, the most significant provisions of which was the consolidation of schools in the districts. It is an interesting fact that before the middle of

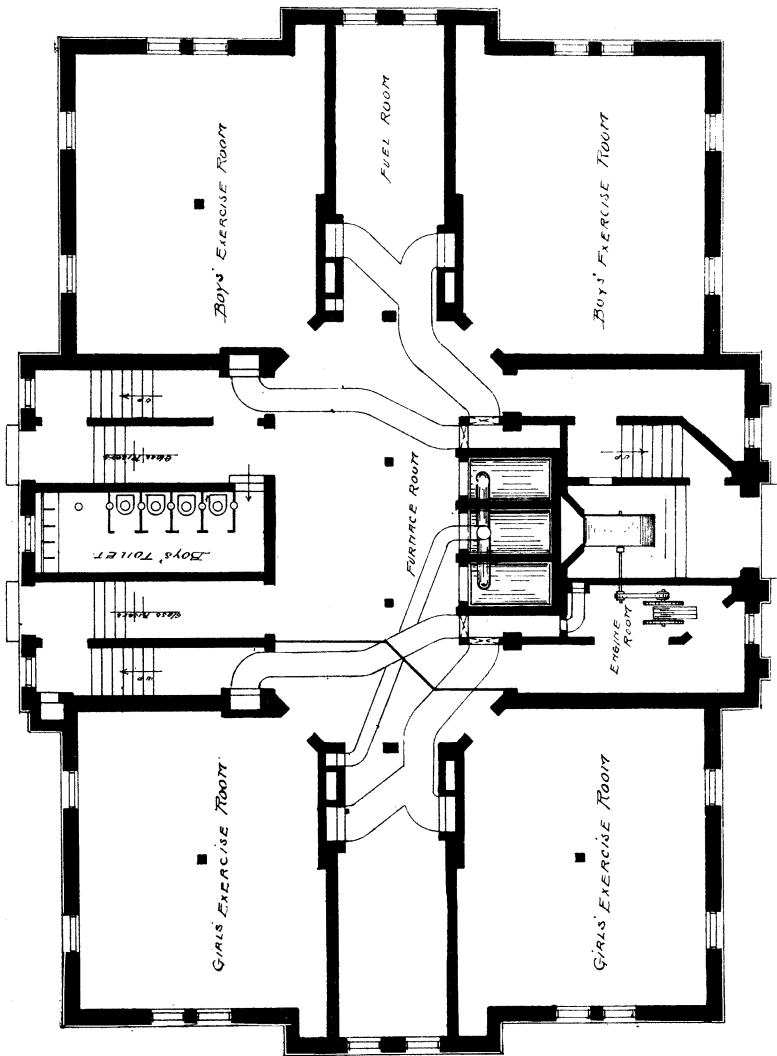


the nineteenth century Mills had seen the real solution of the problem of education in a democracy, and had named consolidation as the key. Out of this thought came the idea of centers of learning in districts, townships, and towns, with combinations possible in districts and townships, and finally with combinations possible between and among districts and townships. This made the township graded school possible, which in turn made possible and necessary the township high school. Mills, in his messages to the legislature in the forties, and afterward in his reports as

state superintendent, of public instruction goes over all the arguments for consolidation and centralization of district schools; and, so far as I know, his arguments have never been improved or added to, unless I except the coming of better roads and better conveyance, notably the bicycle. It was through such men as Mills on the outside, and John I. Morrison chairman of the educational committee in the constitutional convention, that education received recognition in the new constitution. With the new constitution and the law of 1852, the township became the political and the school unit of the state. This fact is of the largest significance in dealing with the Indiana school system, for Indiana was probably the first state to make the township the school unit. Since, it has been adopted by over half of the states in the Union. The claims made for it and admitted need not be repeated here. The new constitution gave state supervision, and the people shortly voted in favor of taxation for the maintenance of schools. The movement forward with the new constitution was interrupted by unfavorable decisions of the courts and by the coming of the Civil War. In the early sixties from these causes the schools suffered and dropped to the lowest level. It was not until after the Civil War that the revival came. The Supreme Court held that local levies for tuition and common-school revenues were constitutional, thus making it possible for towns and townships to provide for terms of school of respectable length. This really was the beginning of local, public high-school education. The law had also made it clear that it was the duty of township trustees to provide secondary schools for pupils who have completed the work in the grades. Out of all these influences, with the township as the unit and center of educational activity, the township high school came. It was an evolution and came naturally. Academies, seminaries, and other secondary schools gradually came under the control of the towns and townships, and there are few private or denominational preparatory schools left. The closing years of the last century witnessed a rapid development in township high schools.

The township high school was usually located in a centrally

situated town, but not always. There are many flourishing schools in rural communities, some of these bearing commissions from the state board of education. Some of these schools are



W. S. KANJUAN, ARCHT.
REVISION 4-1918.

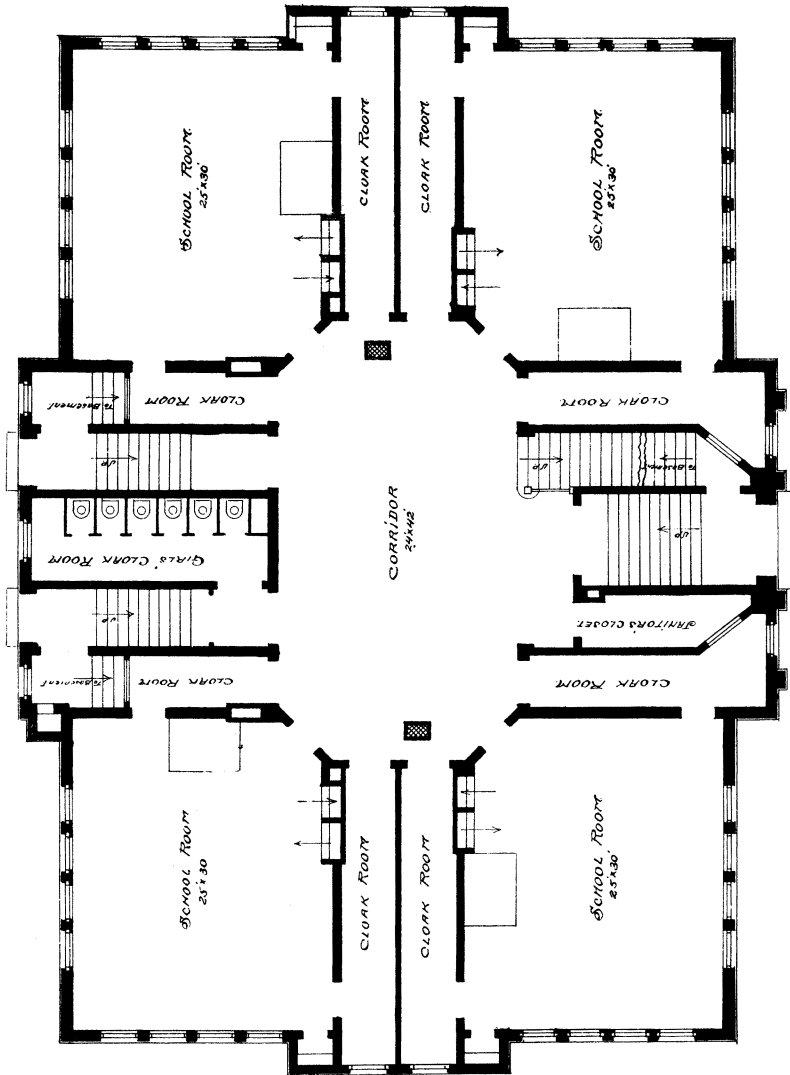
BASEMENT PLAN.
FOUNTAIN CITY SCHOOL BLDG.

located in small municipalities, and are organized jointly between town and township. Others, as hinted above, are joint township schools under the management of two or more townships.

These schools are often the centers of really great learning, having, as they do, some of our strongest men and women as teachers. Bright young graduates of our normal schools, colleges, and universities, ambitious to rise in the profession, come to these schools and attract to them the best young blood in the township. The result is apparent in increased educational interest in the community. The course of study is made to appeal to the interests of the many, and everything is done to make the time spent in school worth while. For the vast majority this is the finishing school, and it is made to mean as much as possible. And so it becomes a great educational center, and marks an epoch in the lives of many who are to take up their life-work in its shadow. It is not a preparatory school for college, though many of its graduates go to college. Its aim is to do the best thing it can for those who presumably will go no farther. Community life determines our course of study, and the pupils are prepared for life's activities. In doing the best thing for the majority who do not enter college, we have found that we are doing the best thing for the minority who do go to college, and we have come to believe that such a course prepares for college best. In the smaller schools courses are articulated with courses in the large high schools, so that in many cases where good work is done, and where the teachers are known, one, two, or three years' work in small schools is accepted in full and given credit for credit in the larger school.

In the matter of school architecture there has been great progress in the state. This is particularly true with regard to township buildings. Some of these high schools are housed in modern, well-equipped buildings that are models in every way. We present here pictures of three of these buildings.

The Nineveh Township High School in Johnson county has been in operation since 1872, and is probably the oldest school of its kind in the state. It was established by the abandonment of three district schools located near the village. The high school is in the center of the village, and is attended by all the pupils in the township prepared to do high-school work. I find an account of the work of this school in State Superintendent



W.S. Kayman, Archt.
Richmond, Ind.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN.
FOUNTAIN CITY SCHOOL BLDG.

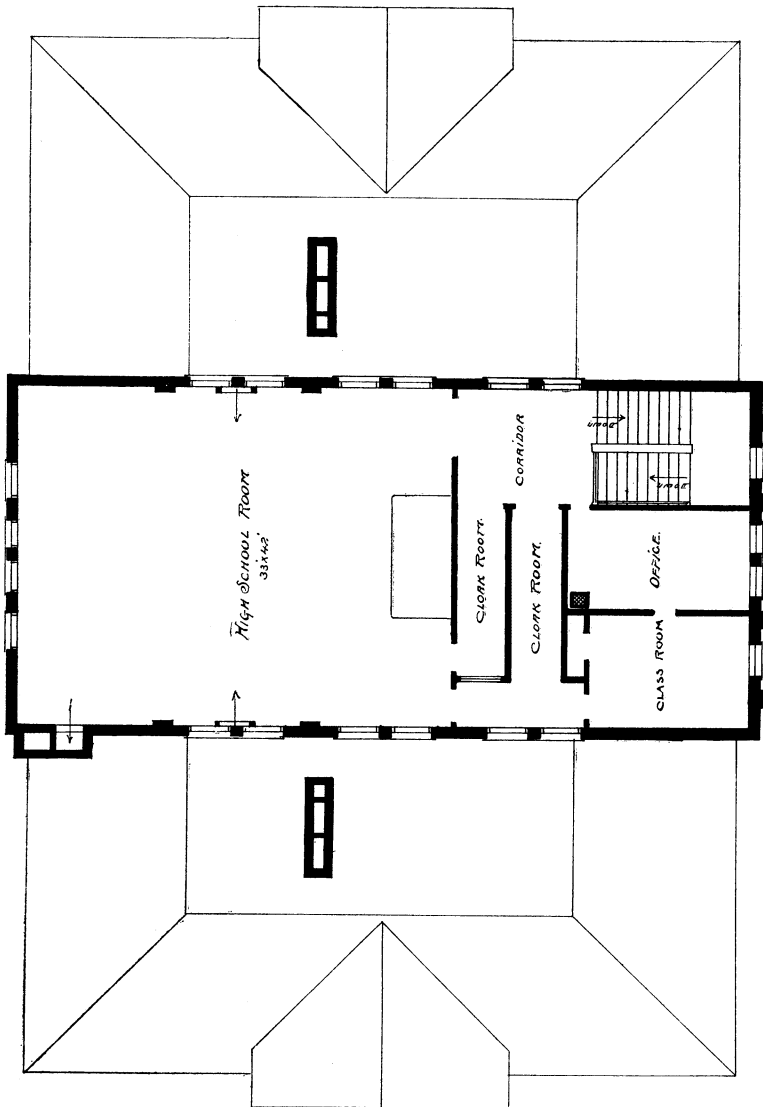
Geeting's report of 1898. Superintendent Geeting gave great impetus to this movement; indeed, his name and the growth of the township high schools are inseparable in Indiana. The following account of the Nineveh school is evidently from the pen of one who was familiar with the work of the school:

It is one of the most potent factors in our community for good, and has unquestionably raised the standard of intelligence, of morality, of taste, and therefore, of life among the people. While a few in the township are opposed to higher education, the vast majority favor the school and would not do without it. The school has many graduates now, some of them in higher institutions of learning, and some filling positions of trust in different parts of the country. Many have married and settled here in the township, and have an elevating influence upon the community. The principal is also superintendent of the grades, and receives four dollars per day. We have two teachers doing high-school work. The principal is a college graduate with a Master's degree, and the assistant is a high-school graduate, and has made other special preparation for her work. We have a four-year course, though the terms are only six to seven months. The character of the work done is equal to that done in any of the high schools or preparatory schools of the state, so far as we go. I firmly believe the work done by our pupils is far superior to that done in the larger towns, as there are fewer things here to take attention from the work. Our pupils range in age from fourteen to twenty-two, and spend an average of two hours a day upon each study. There are five graduates this year, two from town and three from the country. Two of these live about four miles distant, and their parents have conveyed them back and forth for four years. In this connection I would state that about half of our pupils live upon farms. No provision has been made by the trustee for conveyance, but this is not felt as being a hardship, as those living in the country have rigs or wheels of their own. In the first year there are ten pupils; in the second, three; in the the third, four; and in the fourth, five. In Latin, besides the preliminary work and grammar, we read two books of Cæsar and three of Virgil. In mathematics we complete Milne's *High School Algebra* and Wentworth's *Plane Geometry*. We give two years to English literature, two years to general history, one year to geology, one year to physics, one year to rhetoric, one year to physical geography, and three months to civil government.

As another example, the Straughn Township High School, in Henry county, is typical of scores of schools over the state. What I write here is taken from a recent account sent to me of the work of this school:

The township graded school, with a high school, was organized in October, 1893, in a three-room building, with three teachers and one hundred five

W.S. Kaufman, Archt
Richmond, Ind.



SECOND FLOOR PLAN.
FOUNTAIN CITY SCHOOL BLD'G.

pupils, eighteen of whom constituted the freshman class of the high school. Eight of these freshmen had not completed the work in the common schools nor grades and as a consequence six of them dropped out the first year. Two married in the second year, and ten of the original eighteen finished the three-year course. Last year another room was added to the building, and there are now four teachers and one hundred and twenty pupils with a fourth year added to the high-school course. The school has graduated thirty-two pupils. Many who began the work in the Straughn school finished in other high schools, and many did only a part of the work.

That the Straughn school has awakened ideals of culture hitherto unknown in the community is conceded by all. Patrons, pupils, and teachers have worked in harmony, and are equally proud of the school.

Of the thirty-two graduates, sixteen have attended higher institutions of learning. Eight are teachers or have taught school. Six are graduates of business colleges. Four are Indiana University students. Two have been students in the farmers' course at Purdue. One has been a DePauw student. Twelve are farmers, and two are merchants. It is the opinion of the writer that the influence of this school has entered every home in the community, and that it is an influence for better living.

While there are scores of township high schools working under widely different conditions, some with short terms and short courses, and no limited number of teachers, the tendency is to meet the requirements of the state board of education, and there is a constantly increasing number receiving commissions. The requirements for a commission are as follows :

Three years of language, three years of history, three years of mathematics, two years of science, four years of English are required, with electives to complete a full course of four years. This is not meant to be absolute but is suggested as a basis upon which to form a course and as the minimum amount of work required. As further requirements the following may be mentioned: (1) the character of the teaching must be satisfactory; (2) the high-school course must not be less than thirty-two months in length, continuing from the eighth year; (3) the whole time of at least two teachers must be given to the high-school work; (4) the pursuing of a few subjects throughout the entire course rather than many covering short periods; (5) a library adequate to meet all the demands for reference work and general reading supplementary to the regular text-books; (6)

laboratories fully equipped to do all of the necessary work in the sciences pursued in any given high school.

INTERESTING DATA.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----------|
| Number of counties in Indiana | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 92 |
| Number of townships | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,016 |
| Number of high schools, all grades | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 763 |
| Number of township graded schools doing work in common branches only | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,011 |
| Number of township high schools | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 580 |
| Number of commissioned township high schools | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 15 |
| High-school enrolment | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 36,641 |
| Township high-school enrolment | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 13,305 |
| High-school graduates, 1903 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4,440 |
| Township high-school graduates, 1903 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,344 |
| Number of high-school teachers | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,829 |
| Number of township high-school teachers | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 848 |
| Salaries of teachers employed: | | | | | | | | | |
| a) Commissioned high-school teachers (170 days average school year) per year | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | \$ 726.00 |
| b) Township high school teachers (140 days average school year) per year | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 432.00 |
| Per capita cost of maintenance: | | | | | | | | | |
| a) In commissioned high schools | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 33.00 |
| b) In township high schools | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 25.00 |

The value of the work that these township schools are accomplishing cannot be stated. Provision is made for free secondary training for every child in the state. The one great end kept in view is the preparation of the child as fully as possible for the real duties, opportunities, and privileges of life. We are trying to make an institution that will develop manly men and womanly women; one that will teach the boys and girls that there is work to do in the world, and that will help each one to find his life work, and show him how to be successful and happy in it. The secondary school can bring to the pupils and to the community the great forces in life which guide, inspire, and realize possibilities. It can minister to the needs of life, not only by bringing broad fundamental principles of culture, but by suggesting practical social problems and their solutions, and, more than this, by suggesting and pointing out actual vocations and ways to

succeed in them. Our school machinery has been simplified. There is now only one trustee in a township, and the large responsibility placed upon him is gradually being realized, and we are obtaining better men all the while for the position. The dignity of the calling is growing, and there is for us not far in the future to be a complete realization of the things for which we have hoped and for which we have striven.

FASSETT A. COTTON.

OFFICE OF
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION,
Indianapolis, Ind.